

THE Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival
of Religion in *Great Britain, America, &c.*

Saturday OCTOBER 13. 1744. § N^o. 85.

*The Rev. Mr. Blair's Account of the Revival of Religion
at New-Londonderry in Pennsylvania, finish'd.*

ABOUT a Time of *Sickness* she had had, concerning which I had enquired of her, she told me, she expected pretty much to die then, and was very joyful at the near Prospect of her Change; and sensibly griev'd to find herself recover again, chiefly because that while she liv'd here she was so frail and sinful, and cou'd do so little for the Lord's Honour. I was with her in the Time of that Sickness, and indeed, I scarcely ever saw one appearing to be so fully and sweetly satisfy'd under the afflicting Hand of God; she manifestly appear'd to lie under it with a peaceful Serenity and divine Sweetness in her whole Soul. In a Word, her whole Deportment in the World bespeaks much Humility and Heavenliness of Spirit.

One of our Christian Friends, a Man about *fifty Years* of Age, was remov'd from us by Death in the *Beginning of May* last; of whom I can give some broken imperfect Account, which perhaps may be of some Use. His Name was *Hanse Kirkpatrick*: he was a Man of a pretty good Understanding, and had been, I believe, a sober Professor for many Years, tho' he had not been very long in *America*. After the Work of Religion begun so powerfully amongst us, I found in Conversation with him, that he believ'd it to be a good Work, but seem'd very unwilling to give up his good Opinion of his own Case: He told me of some *Concern* and *Trouble* he had been in about his Soul in his *younger Years*; but yet the Case look'd suspicious that he had got *Ease* in a *legal Way*, upon an *outward Form of Religion*. At another Time being at his House,

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and taking up a little Book that lay by me on the Table, which I found to be Mr. MATHER's *Dead Faith anatomiz'd*, and *Self-justiciary convicted*, he said to me, that was indeed a strange Book as ever he saw, and that according to that Author it was a great Thing indeed to have a *right Faith* that was true and saving, another Thing than it was generally suppos'd to be, or to this Purpose. He seem'd to me at that Time to be under more Fears about his own Case than I had observ'd in him before. Not long after this, as he was hearing a Sermon one Day, the Word was apply'd with irresistible Evidence and Power to his Heart, so that he saw himself as yet in a *perishing undone Case*: Whereupon the Distress and Exercise of his Soul was so great, that he fell off the Seat on which he was sitting, and wept and cry'd very bitterly. A little after this, he went to *Philadelphia*, at the Time of the Meeting of the *Synod*, in Hopes that perhaps he might meet with some Benefit to his Soul, by hearing the Ministers preach there, or by conversing with some of them. He told me afterwards, that while he was there, and as he walk'd the Streets, he was unspeakably distress'd with the View of his miserable Condition; so that he could hardly keep his Distress from being publickly discern'd upon him: and, that he seem'd sometimes to be even in a Manner afraid that the Streets would open and swallow up such a wretched Creature. He told me of his *Trouble*, and his very sweet *Relief* out of it, in a most moving Manner, under a very fresh Sense and Impression of both; but the Particulars of his Relief I have quite forgot.

He was afterwards chosen and set apart for a *ruling Elder* in the Congregation. He dy'd of an *Impossthume*, and gradually wasted away for a long Time before his Death, and was for about *two Months* intirely confin'd to his Bed. He told me, that for some Time before he was laid Bed-fast, he had been full of very distressing Fears and Jealousies about his Soul's State, and was altogether unsatisfied about his Interest in CHRIST; but that soon after he was confin'd to his Bed, the LORD afforded him his comforting Presence, clear'd up his Interest, and remov'd his Fears. After this he continu'd still clear and peaceful in his Soul, and sweetly and wholly resign'd to the LORD's Will until Death. While he had Strength to speak much he was free and forward to discourse of GOD and divine Things. One Time as *two other* of our
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Elders were with him, he exhorted them to continue stedfast and faithful to GOD's Truths and Cause ; for he said, if he had a Thousand Souls, he could freely venture them all upon the Doctrines which had been taught them in this Congregation. One Time when I took Leave of him, he burst out into Tears saying, ' I had been the Messenger of the LORD of Hosts to him, that the Lord had sent to call him out of the broad Way of Destruction.' For some Days before his Decease he could speak very little, but to all Appearance, with a great Deal of Serenity and Sweetness of Soul he fell asleep in JESUS.

There have been very comfortable Instances of *little Children* among us. *Two Sisters*, the one being about *seven*, the other about *nine* Years of Age, were hopefully converted *that Summer*, when Religion was so much reviv'd here. I discours'd with them both very lately, and both from their own Account, and the Account of their Parents, there appears to have been a lasting and thorough Change wrought in them. They speak of their Soul-Experiences with a very becoming Gravity, and apparent Impression of the Things they speak of.

The *youngest* was awaken'd by hearing the Word preach'd : she told me she heard in Sermons that except Persons were *convinc'd* and *converted* they wou'd surely go to *Hell* ; and she knew she was not converted : This set her to praying with great Earnestness, with Tears and Cries ; yet her Fears and *Distress* continued for several Days, 'till one Time as she was praying, her Heart she said was drawn out in great Love to GOD ; and as she tho't of Heaven and being with GOD, she was fill'd with Sweetness and Delight : I cou'd not find by her that she had at that Time any explicit particular Tho'ts about CHRIST as a *Redeemer*, but she said she knew then that CHRIST had dy'd for Sinners. She told me, she often found such Delight and Love to GOD since as she did then, and at such Times she was very willing to *die* that she might be with GOD : but she said, she was sometimes afraid yet of going to Hell. I ask'd her, ' If she was troubled at any Time when she was not afraid of going to Hell ?' She said, " Yes : " I ask'd her, ' What she was troubled for then ?' she said, ' Because she had done *ill* to GOD ;' meaning, that she had done *Evil* and *Sin* against God. Sometime after, she first found *Comfort* ; one Night when her *Father* and all the rest of

the Family, but her *Mother* and herself, were gone to a *private Society*, she said to her *Mother*, ' That the People were singing and praying where her *Father* was gone,' and desir'd her *Mother* to do the same with her : And after they were gone to Bed, ' She desir'd her *Mother* to sing some *Psalms* which she had by Heart, for she said she did not want to go to Sleep.'

Her *Sister* was bro't into *Trouble* about her Soul that *same Summer*, by *Sickness* : It continued with her some Time after her *Recovery* ; 'till one Day, coming Home from Meeting, as she heard some People speaking about *CHRIST* and Heaven, her Heart was inflam'd with Love to *CHRIST*. She says, that ' when she has *CHRIST*'s Presence with her she does not know what to do to get away and be with *GOD*.'

Their Parents told me that for a long Time they seem'd to be almost wholly taken up in Religion ; that no Weather thro' the Extremity of *Winter* wou'd hinder them from going out daily to By-places for secret Prayer ; and if any Thing came in the Way that they could not get out for Prayer at such Times as they inclin'd and tho't most proper, they wou'd weep and cry. Their Parents say, they are very obedient Children, and strict Observers of the Sabbath.

There are likewise other young Ones in the Place, of whom I know nothing to the contrary, but what they continue hopeful and religious to this Day.

Revival of Religion in other Parts of Pennsylvania and the neighbouring Countries.

This blessed Shower of divine Influences spread very much thro' THIS PROVINCE that Summer : And was likewise considerable in some other Places bordering upon it. The Accounts of some Ministers being something distinguish'd by their searching awakening Doctrine, and solemn pathetic Manner of Address, and the News of the Effects of their Preaching upon their Hearers, seem'd in some Measure to awaken People thro' the Country to consider their careless and formal Way of going on in Religion ; and very much excited their Desires to hear those Ministers. There were several vacant Congregations without any settled Pastors, which earnestly beg'd for their Visits : and several Ministers who did not appear heartily to put their Shoulder to help in carrying on the same

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Work, yet then yielded to the pressing Importunities of their People in inviting those Brethren to preach in their Pulpits: so that they were very much call'd abroad, and employ'd in incessant Labours, and the LORD wrought with them mightily. *Very great Assemblies* would ordinarily meet to hear them, on *any Day of the Week*; and oftentimes a surprizing Power accompanying their Preaching was visible among the Multitudes of their Hearers. It was a very comfortable enlivening Time to GOD's People; and great Numbers of secure careless Professors, and many loose irreligious Persons thro' the Land, were deeply convinc'd of their miserable perishing Estates; and there is abundant Reason to believe and be satisfied, that many of them were in the Issue savingly converted to GOD. I myself have had Occasion to converse with a great many up and down, who have given a most agreeable Account of very precious and clear Experiences of the Grace of GOD. Several even in *Baltimore*, a County in the Province of MARYLAND, who were bro't up almost in a State of Heathenism, without almost any Knowledge of the true Doctrines of Christianity, afford very satisfying Evidences of being brought to a saving Acquaintance with GOD in CHRIST JESUS.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavour'd to give a *brief Account* of the *Revival of Religion* among us, *in these Parts*; in which I have endeavour'd, all along, to be conscientiously exact, in relating Things according to the naked Truth: knowing, that I must not speak wickedly, even for GOD; nor talk deceitfully for HIM.

And upon the whole I must say, It is beyond all Dispute with me, and I think 'tis beyond all reasonable Contradiction, that GOD has carried on a *great and glorious Work* of his Grace among us.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your very respectful Son and Servant,

Samuel Blair.

Rev. Sir,

HAVING an Opportunity of obtaining these Attestations before sending my Letter to you, I send them also along, if you please they may be inserted in the *Christian History* at the End of my Account.

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New-Londonderry, August 7. 1744.

WE the under Subscribers, Ruling Elders in the Congregation of New-Londonderry, do give our Testimony and Attestation to the above Account of the Revival of Religion in this Congregation and other Parts of this Country, so far as the said Account relates to Things that were open to publick Observation, and such Things as we have had Opportunity of being acquainted with. Particularly, we testify that there has been a great and very general Awakening among People, whereby they have been stirred up to an earnest uncommon Concern and Diligence about their eternal Salvation, according to the above Account of it: And, that many give very comfortable Evidence by their Knowledge, Declaration of Experience, and conscientious Practice, of their being savingly changed and turned to God.

James Cochran

John Ramsay

John Love

John Smith

John Simson

Wm. Boyd.

We doubt not but our pious Readers will be entertained with the following History of the Revival of Religion in Germany in the last Century: as contained in the Preface of a famous Book entitled PIETAS HALLENSIS, or, An Historical Narration of the Orphan House and other charitable Institutions at Glaucha near Hall in Saxony: By Augustus Hermannus Franck, Professor of Divinity in the Frederician University of Hall, Pastor of Glaucha and Director of the pious Foundation there; with a short History of Pietism: Printed in London 1705.

§. 19. **N**OW forasmuch as that publick Work of God, which has broke out so eminently of late Years in and about the Royal University of Hall, as from it's chief Center, dispersing it self far and near, lay for some Time before hidden as it were in Embrio, and that there manifestly appears to have been a Seed of purer Christianity

Christianity gradually quickening and springing up in the midst of the Lutheran Reformation : And moreover forasmuch as the greatest Part of English Readers are not much acquainted with what relates either to the Rise or Progress of these Matters, how considerable soever in themselves they are ; and several have desired some just Account hereof, which they might rely on : It has been thought expedient to Answer here, in brief, the Desires and Solicitations of such, by giving a faithful and simple View of this whole Affair, not only in this, but also in several other Provinces and Circles of Germany, and pointing out the principal Persons and Springs, that have been set on Work in the propagating Christian Piety, and promoting a *solid Reformation of Manners*, among all Orders both of the Clergy and Laity.

§. 20. It hath been remarked by some curious Observers, that for some Ages past, about the beginning of each Century, there has happened some considerable Change in the State of Religion, as the Motions in Germany first, (and successively in other Parts) by Means of Dr. *Luther's* Reformation soon after the Beginning of the sixteenth Century after Christ, as just an Hundred Years before those in *Bohemia*, by Means of *Huss* ; and another Hundred backward, those in *England*, by Means of *Wickliff* : So in like Manner just about an Hundred Years after *Luther*, there arose near the same Place, and upon the same Stock, another Reformation ; but which did not respect so much Opinion as Practice. This was first promoted by the most eminent and pious Dr. *Gerhard*, Divinity Professor at *Jena*, whose great Candour as well as Zeal is sufficiently conspicuous both in his Works and Life : But chiefly by the excellent *John Arndt*, General Superintendent by the Churches under the Princes of *Lunenburg*. These two, laying deeply to Heart the Decay of *Christian Piety*, were wholly taken up with the Thoughts of reviving the Spirit and Life of Christianity among those of the *Augustan Confession* in particular, as among all professed Christians in general. The latter of these by his most celebrated Piece of *True Christianity* published in several Languages, and by that of his *Garden of Paradise* (in Confirmation of which last some Things are credibly reported hardly inferior to Miracles) was an Instrument of the divine Blessing in the Conversion of many Souls into the true and interior Christianity ; however it happened to him, as it generally happens to all, that

that are engaged in great and good Designs : He was misunderstood, misrepresented, opposed and vilified by many ; and even by some, who from their Education and Profession should have better understood him ; and whose truest Interest it certainly was, laying aside needless Disputations, to have concur'd, according to all Obligations general and special, in the promoting together with him Purity and Spirituality of Religion. The learned *Lucas Osiander* a Divine of *Tubingen*, was among these much taken Notice of, by Reason of a Book of his written against him in a most satyrical Style, called : *His Theological Cogitations* : And whereof he is said to have seriously repented, when he came to die. It was not long before he was most solidly answered by *Varenius* a judicious Divine, in a Piece entitled, *A Vindication of true Christianity* : Nor were there wanting also some others of the more pious and candid Lutheran Divines, who by their publick Writings and Testimonies, about the same Time, defended the Cause of true Religion and of this holy Person : Such were *Egardus* an *Holsteiner*, *Dilgerus* a *Danzicker*, one *M. B. T. B.* and *Dorscheus* a Professor of *Straßbourg*, who wrote an Epigram under his Picture. He was an early Trumpet, about the Time (which is not a little observable) when *Germany* was embroiled in an intestine War, for thirty Years together, and the Protestant Cause seemed to lie at Stake : But God then in the midst of his Indignation remembered his Mercy, and raised several eminent Instruments of the Truth, amongst which this was the most conspicuous : Even as in the present Judgments of War and Desolation he has also remembered his Covenant, and excited many Persons, both in *Germany* and in other Countries, to bear a living and powerful Testimony to the Truth of Christianity, as originally delivered by its blessed Founder. He was a Man truly of deep fundamental Piety, Knowledge, and Religion, and almost continually exercised in the blessed Cross of our dear Saviour. He had imbibed chiefly his Doctrine and Living-Way of Practice from *Thauler* and *Kempis* : And all what he wrote was in a scriptural Style, and adapted to all, even the Infants of Christ.

(To be continued.)